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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 AOS-00 CIAE-00 PA-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-15 HA-05
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R 151845Z JAN 80
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6368
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PAN
DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR 0357

E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PINR, SHUM, ES
SUBJECT: ARCHBISHOP COMMENTS ON POC-MILITARY COALITION; ROLES OF OLIGARCHY AND EXTREME LEFT; ENLISTMENT OF EX-MINISTER IN FPL

REF: SAN SALVADOR 0335

1. IN REVIEWING POLITICAL SITUATION DURING HOMILY JANUARY 14, ARCHBISHOP ROMERO NOTED THAT POC AND THE ARMED FORCE HAD REAFFIRMED COMMITMENT TO REFORMS AND OPPOSITION TO OLIGARCHY. HE PROFESSED SURPRISE THE ARMED FORCE HAD ACCEPTED SAME BASIC POINTS IT HAD REJECTED WHEN DEMANDED BY EX-MINISTERS, AND QUESTIONED WHY THE CHANGE. HE SAID HE HOPED IT WAS A GENUINE CONVERSION AND A SINCERE RECOGNITION OF AN ERROR. AS USUAL HE CALLED FOR DEEDS, NOT MERE WORDS AS REGARDS REFORMS.

2. ARCHBISHOP QUESTIONED WHETHER RECONSTITUTED JUNTA IS READY TO REESTABLISH CREDIBILITY BY SUCH MEASURES AS CONFRONTING THE OLIGARCHY, REDISTRIBUTING LAND AND WEALTH, CEASING REPRESSION, CLARIFYING POLITICAL PRISONERS AND DISAPPEARED PERSONS ISSUE, AND EXHAUSTIVELY INVESTIGATING RECENT "BLOODY INCIDENTS" AND TAKING STEPS TO PUNISH THE GUILTY. ARCHBISHOP RAISED NOT ONLY QUESTION AS TO WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO DISAPPEARED PERSONS, BUT ALSO AS TO WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO SPECIAL INVESTIGATING COMMISSION (CEI) REPORT WHICH SHOULD LARGELY HAVE BEEN COMPLETED BY CEI PRIOR TO ITS RESIGNATION AS SIXTY-DAY DEADLINE FOR FINAL REPORT HAD ALMOST BEEN REACHED ANYWAY. ARCHBISHOP EXPRESSED CONCERN NO MENTION OF REPORT WAS MADE IN POC-ARMED FORCE AGREEMENTT.

3. ARCHBISHOP WARNED THAT OLIGARCHY IS IN PROCESS OF TRYING TO ORGANIZE AND DEPLOY ITS FORCES. HE POINTED OUT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY ASKED OLIGARCHY TO SHARE WEALTH AND POWER TO AVOID CIVIL WAR AND REITERATED IT WAS STILL NOT TOO LATE FOR THEM TO ACCEPT THIS INVITATION.

4. IN APPARENT REFERENCE TO BROADCAST OF LEFTIST POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS' UNITY ANNOUNCEMENT (REFTEL), ARCHBISHOP SAID HE HAD HEARD MUCH SHOUTING, BUT "NOT ONE CONSTRUCTIVE IDEA". HE TWICE REPEATED ADMONITION TO LEFT NOT TO BE SMALL FANATICAL GROUPS, AND CAUSTICALLY INQUIRED WHY THERE WAS ALL OF THE CLAMOR AGAINST "IMPERIALISM", BUT NOT ONE WORD AGAINST SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN.

5. REGARDING DECISION BY EX-MINISTER OF EDUCATION SALVADOR SAMAYOA TO JOIN TERRORIST FPL, ARCHBISHOP STATED THAT "VIOLENCE IS RETROGRESSION OF CIVILIZATION". HE SAID HE RESPECTED SAMAYOA'S PERSONAL OPTION BUT CONDEMNED ITS PROPAGANDA USE BY TERRORISTS SEEKING SUPPORT OR BY OLIGARCHY USING IT TO CREATE FEAR. HE ALSO CONDEMNED SITUATION THAT REQUIRED A PERSON TO EXERCISE SUCH RADICAL OPTIONS. EMBASSY HAS REQUESTED MEETING WITH PADRE FRANCISCO ESTRADA, ONE OF ROMERO'S CLOSEST ADVISERS. PADRE ESTRADA HAS SUGGESTED THAT MEETING BE HELD IN ABEYANCE UNTIL FORMATION OF NEW CABINET.
DEVINE

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